



# Glacier National Park Commercial Services Plan Scoping Newsletter

## A Message from the Superintendent

Glacier National Park is beginning a planning effort to develop a comprehensive *Commercial Services Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CSP/EIS)* to implement decisions from the *1999 Final General Management Plan*. We invite you to participate in this next phase of planning as the park approaches its centennial in 2010.

The Commercial Services Plan (CSP) will identify the level of commercial services to be provided in the park and the complementary role these services play in accomplishment of the park mission. Your input is needed to help the park understand the public's desires regarding commercial services.

The General Management Plan (GMP) for Glacier National Park commits the National Park Service (NPS) to rehabilitate the park's historic lodging facilities and outlines the general direction for commercial services throughout the park. The CSP will provide more detailed and necessary site-specific actions to implement these recent decisions.



Suzanne Lewis - Superintendent

To help reduce expenses, we encourage you to use the park's website to obtain information about the project and share your ideas with park management. For those who cannot access and/or choose not to use the Internet, we will endeavor to keep you informed as the process moves forward through mailings such as this. We will periodically update the CSP website and issue additional newsletters to:

- ▶ identify opportunities for your comments and ideas
- ▶ provide current information, including where we are in the planning process
- ▶ summarize what we have heard from the public

I urge you to take some time now and help us implement the GMP by planning the future of commercial services at Glacier National Park. Please share your thoughts on what kind(s) of commercial visitor services should be provided within the park. What specific issues and concerns would you like to see addressed in the CSP/EIS?

You can share these thoughts through the online response form on our website at <http://www.nps.gov/planning/glac> or you may submit written comments to the following address:

Glacier National Park, Attention: Commercial Services Plan/EIS, P.O. Box 128, West Glacier, MT 59936

**For this phase of the planning process, known as scoping, we need your written input (received either online or postmarked) no later than December 30, 2000.**

Sincerely,  
Suzanne Lewis

# What are Commercial Services?

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Commercial services are defined as: any or all goods, activities, services, or any things offered to park visitors and/or the general public recreational purposes which:

- ▶ use park resources
- ▶ are undertaken for/or result in compensation, monetary gain, benefit or profit to an individual organization or corporation (whether or not such entity is organized for purposes recognized as nonprofit under local, state, or federal law)

To ensure a complementary role for private enterprise within national park areas, Congress defined concession activity and enacted *Title IV of the National Park's Omnibus Management Act of 1998*, under which the NPS authorizes park concession operations. It requires that development "be limited to those accommodations, facilities, and services that are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment . . ." of the national park area in which they are located ". . . and that are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation and conservation of the resources and values of the unit."

Commercial services assist the NPS in fulfilling its mission and provide key opportunities to create quality visitor experiences.

- ▶ They allow for the public's use and enjoyment of the park.
- ▶ They meet Glacier National Park's management philosophy by continuing to provide traditional experiences and consider new appropriate experiences, which the National Park Service cannot realistically furnish.
- ▶ Commercial services enhance the visitor's ability to experience the park while reflecting the park's purpose, significance, guiding principles, overall philosophy and geographic area philosophies.



Commercial visitor services currently provided in Glacier National Park, by contract or permit, include:

- ▶ overnight accommodations
- ▶ food and beverage services
- ▶ giftshops and campstores
- ▶ interpretive vehicle tours and transportation
- ▶ guided horseback rides and packing services
- ▶ guided backpacking and day hiking
- ▶ interpretive boat tours and small boat rentals
- ▶ guided bicycle tours
- ▶ guided photography and art seminars
- ▶ guided cross-country skiing

## The Commercial Services Plan will...

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The Commercial Services Plan (CSP) will provide a framework or broad, general direction for commercial services based on the 1999 General Management Plan (GMP). It will not revisit decisions already made in the GMP. The GMP for Glacier National Park committed the park to rehabilitate the historic lodging facilities in Glacier and required the development of a commercial services plan. The CSP will provide criteria to help define which commercial service are "necessary and appropriate" in Glacier National Park and establish the framework for future decisions.

The Commercial Services Plan will consider alternatives that address:

- ▶ The overall mix (type, capacity, and level of service) of commercial services. It will provide site-specific schematic designs for key areas of the park and analyze the resource impacts of the proposals.
- ▶ Establish the character and level of service by park area based on need, expectations, economic feasibility, resource implications, the general philosophy for the park, and each geographic area, etc.
- ▶ Provide an implementation strategy for rehabilitating the historic hotels and continuing a wide range of visitor experiences.
- ▶ Provide the specific information necessary for development of new concession contracts including those that allow the rehabilitation efforts.



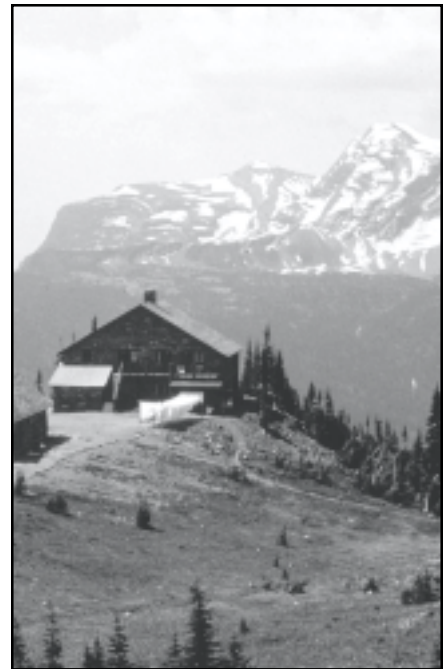
# Decisions Reached in the General Management Plan

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The following recaps the direction and guidance provided by the *1999 Final General Management Plan* (GMP). The general philosophy and management strategy developed in the GMP recognizes the distinctive character of individual geographical areas in the park and the suitability of various zones within these areas to provide for a range of visitor experiences.

The overall guiding philosophy for Glacier National Park will be to manage most of the park for its wild character and for the integrity of the park's unique natural heritage, while retaining traditional visitor services and facilities. Visitors may enjoy the park from many vantage points. A broad range of opportunities would be provided for people to experience, understand, study, and enjoy the park. Cooperation with park neighbors would be emphasized in managing use and resources.

Retaining the distinctive characteristics of individual areas is fundamental and must be managed within the context of changing resource and social and economic conditions while traditional visitor services and facilities are sustained in areas of the park that historically have supported those services and facilities. The park will be managed to retain its classic western national park character. This does not, however, mean, "frozen in time."



## Management Philosophies by Area

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### Many Glacier

The Many Glacier area would be managed to preserve its wild character while providing visitors opportunities to experience such activities as observing wildlife, hiking, camping, and sight-seeing. Nationally significant historic resources would be preserved and managed to maintain the grand hotel and family lodge traditions.

### Goat Haunt - Belly River

The area would be managed for its international importance to park visitors, for its wild character and wildlife, and for the shared natural and cultural resources of adjoining nations. As in other areas of the park, management actions would emphasize cooperation and coordination in the spirit of the International Peace Park, World Heritage Site, and Man and the Biosphere designations.

### Going-to-the-Sun Road Corridor

The Going-to-the-Sun Road corridor would be managed to provide all visitors with an opportunity to experience the scenic majesty and historic character of the park through a wide range of visitor activities, services, and facilities. The cultural significance and traditional use of the Going-to-the-Sun Road would be emphasized.

### Two Medicine

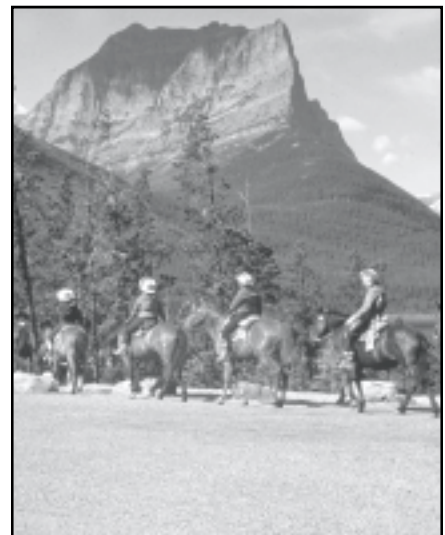
The area would be managed to preserve its culturally significant resources, wild character, and important wildlife habitat. Frontcountry and backcountry camping would continue. Traditional visitor services would be available in the Two Medicine Valley.

### North Fork

The North Fork would be preserved to contribute to the integrity and primitive character of the transboundary watershed. Management actions would reflect the importance of interagency and international cooperation. Visitor facilities would be rustic and would preserve a national park quality and style of development that has become increasingly rare. Management actions would preserve that primitive character. Commercial services will not be allowed in the North Fork per the *North Fork Plan*.

### Middle Fork

This area would be managed to preserve its remote and wild character through a range of primitive visitor experiences. Visitor and administrative facilities would occur only along U.S. Highway 2.



# How You Can Help!

While we heard from a very broad segment of the public on the topic of commercial services during the development of the GMP, we want to make certain we did not miss important issues and concerns that currently need to be addressed in this planning effort.

Please take some time and share your thoughts, ideas, and opinions on how we can provide the highest quality service to the visiting public while preserving Glacier's resources for future generations.

- ▶ What commercial visitor services do you think are necessary and appropriate in Glacier National Park?
- ▶ Where and how would you like to see these services provided?
- ▶ Given that the GMP committed to rehabilitation of the hotels and allowed for redevelopment in some of the developed areas, what concerns/issues would you have regarding how the rehabilitation/redevelopment is done?
- ▶ What issues and concerns need to be addressed in the EIS?

We look forward to hearing from you by December 30, 2000, and thank you for your ongoing assistance and support of Glacier National Park.

## Public Meeting Schedule for the Commercial Services Plan

### Kalispell, MT

Dec. 4, 2000 - 4pm to 7pm  
West Coast Kalispell Center Hotel

### Missoula, MT

Dec. 5, 2000 - 4pm to 7pm  
Ruby's Inn and Convention Center

### Great Falls, MT

Dec 6, 2000 - 4pm to 7pm  
Best Western - Ponderosa Inn

### Browning, MT

Dec 7, 2000 - 1pm to 4pm  
Blackfeet Community College

### Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

Dec 7, 2000 - 4pm to 7pm  
Ramada Hotel and Suites

**Glacier National Park**  
**Commercial Services Plan/EIS**  
**P.O. Box 128**  
**West Glacier, MT 59936**

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people, so that all may experience our heritage.